











# THE TIMES

PAST   PRESENT   FUTURE









South Front of THE TIMES Office: Queen Victoria Street.

THE



TIMES

1785

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PAST  
PRESENT FUTURE

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1932

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED  
AT THE OFFICE OF THE TIMES  
PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE  
LONDON

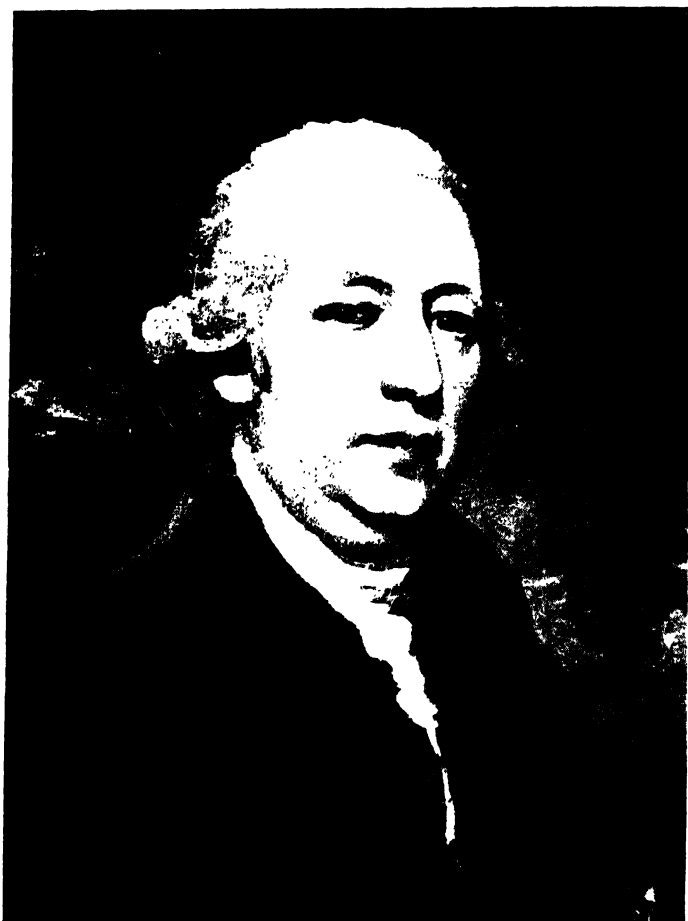


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JOHN WALTER THE FIRST (1739-1812).

# THE TIMES

## I

### THE BEGINNINGS

1785-1802

**W**HEN John Walter founded the newspaper which is now **THE TIMES**, he thought of it rather as a means than as an end. A leading London coal merchant and underwriter in Lloyd's, he had been ruined by the war with America ; and, disappointed in his hope of a post under the Government, he was wondering how to provide for himself and his family when he fell in with a man named Henry Johnson, who had revived an old plan for setting up type not by single letters or figures but by logotypes—that is, by combinations of several in one piece. John Walter bought Johnson's patents for this logographic process, as it was called, and improved upon them ; and in May, 1784, he announced from the " Logographic Office, Blackfriars," that he had purchased " the printing-house formerly occupied by Mr. Basket near Apothecaries Hall," and was going to start logographic printing there. That printing-house had formerly been the King's printing-house, and it stood on the site now and for nearly 150 years occupied by the offices of **THE TIMES**.

It looked at first as if logographic printing was to bring John Walter no return of his lost prosperity and success. The trade was bitterly opposed to the innovation ; and the public cared nothing about how books were printed. But John Walter was



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one of those rare men who are at once enthusiastic and resolute. He was determined to prove that logographic printing was quicker and cheaper than the usual kind. No surer proof of quick, cheap printing than a newspaper ! He would start a newspaper, both to advertise the logographic process and to show the other newspapers that with its aid he could beat them. And on January 1st, 1785, he published the first number of *THE DAILY UNIVERSAL REGISTER PRINTED LOGOGRAPHICALLY BY HIS MAJESTY'S PATENT*.

Even under such a title the new journal did not founder ; but it did not find smooth water. The little four-page sheet was sold at 2½d., which was " over one halfpenny under the price paid for seven out of eight of the morning papers " ; and though the proprietor and " conductor " admitted that at that price it could not pay, he trusted to his many business friends and connexions to send him plenty of advertisements, which he promised not to hold over nor to decline. By giving the substance only of the debates in Parliament, the paper would be able to appear regularly at six o'clock and contain later news than any of its rivals ; and, " like a well-filled table, it should contain something suited to every palate." It was to be, in fact, a " register of the times "—and in that phrase is found the first hint of the title under which it was destined to achieve greatness.

These engagements it did its best to fulfil ; but there was a worm in the bud. That cankerworm was the horrid truth that logographic printing had not turned out to be any quicker than the ordinary way of setting type. The words " Printed Logographically " were kept in the title for five years or more ; then little by little the logotypes fell into disuse. And the notion that they were cheaper had to be given up too. On April 1st, 1785, the price was raised to 3d. And on January 1st, 1788, the title was changed and the 940th number of the paper was published as *THE TIMES* or *DAILY UNIVERSAL REGISTER*. On March 18th, the alternative title was omitted and the journal became, and remains, *THE TIMES*.

What had happened was not that John Walter had lost his interest in printing, but that he had very greatly enlarged his interest

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in journalism. There was little change at first ; but on March 6th, 1788, there came a foretaste of achievement to follow. The House of Commons spent the whole night of March 5th-6th in a debate about the East India Company and the Government. At seven o'clock in the morning it divided, and almost immediately THE TIMES came out with a report, four columns long, of the earlier speeches, the figures of the division, and an apology for not giving more news of the debate. Similar triumphs over its rivals were achieved in the two following days. It was evident that a driving force was at work in the printing-house in Blackfriars. And in the issue of March 25th, 1788, THE TIMES published a manifesto of its aims and ideals which deserves not to be forgotten :—

To record with *fidelity* the events which occur in the world of POLITICS, COMMERCE, and FASHION, ought to be the peculiar province of a *newspaper*. How little this is attended to, the present state of our diurnal publications will fully answer. Instead of conveying to the liberal and enlightened mind information, and rational amusement, they too frequently present details of events that never took place, prostitute the language of eulogium to persons and things unworthy of public favour ; or, what is still more reprehensible, sacrifice, without any regard to truth, the reputations of private individuals, whose manners are unoffending ; or wantonly stab the professional characters of those who are candidates for popular applause.

Solicitous to correct enormities so flagrant, and to present the world with a newspaper—such as, in the opinion of the conductors of this publication, a newspaper *ought to be*—THE TIMES was established :—it claimed a liberal support, and did not fail to receive it. To render its merits still more conspicuous, and ensure an extensive patronage, it is now further improved by an acquisition of correspondents of the first literary abilities which this country can boast ; consequently highly capable of executing the avocations of the different departments which they have undertaken to fill ; and the repetition of whose names, were we at liberty to publish them, would, on the first mention, insure to this paper a sale infinitely more extensive than that of any co-temporary publication.

The DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT will be given with a marked correctness and impartiality, highly gratifying to public curiosity.—Our Reporters being of the first class, equally incapable of perverting the language of debate to serve the purposes of FACTION, or to support the popularity of ADMINISTRATION.

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With respect to POLITICS, both domestic and foreign, such arrangements have been made as cannot fail to enable us to present our readers with the most authentic and early intelligence.

On matters of COMMERCE—that great source of national prosperity—pre-eminent, as from our earliest publication we have been, recent efforts have enabled us to convey in future accumulated information.

The WORLD OF FASHION, we have taken effectual measures to represent, as it really may be found ; and to record with prompt authenticity the events which occur in high life, whether they consist of fashionable levities, or *unfashionable* virtues.

In what respects the STAGE and every CANDIDATE for PUBLIC FAVOUR, our reports, as they ever have, so they ever shall be, wholly unbiassed by rancour, and uninfluenced by capricious partiality : for in the one instance we think an opposite conduct *illiberal* :—not to say unjust :—in the other, we think it highly reprehensible.

To *indecent* language or *double entendre*, no place shall be given in THE TIMES, nor shall it contain any passage capable of insulting the eye, or ear, of modesty, or suffusing the cheek of innocence with a blush.

With such claims to general patronage, we presume to solicit it ; and trust that by such a conduct, joined to the aid of superior abilities, we shall obtain it in a degree as extensive as we shall endeavour to merit.

That all this was not empty boasting was very soon to be proved. In July, 1789, the French Revolution broke out with the destruction of the Bastille. In October, THE TIMES was the first English paper to announce the removal of King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette from Versailles to Paris ; John Walter had arranged in the French capital an agency for swift transmission of the French newspapers. Later he found that means too slow, and he sent his own correspondent to Paris. Thus THE TIMES had its own special reports of the massacres of August and September, 1792, and of the execution of King Louis in January, 1793, and of Queen Marie Antoinette in the following October. In February, 1793, it was the first to announce in England the declaration of war by France against England and Holland ; in 1794, in spite of Robespierre's orders, the paper continued to maintain a correspondent in Paris and others in all the principal frontier towns. A rising stamp duty on newspapers, a tax on paper, the fierce competition of rivals

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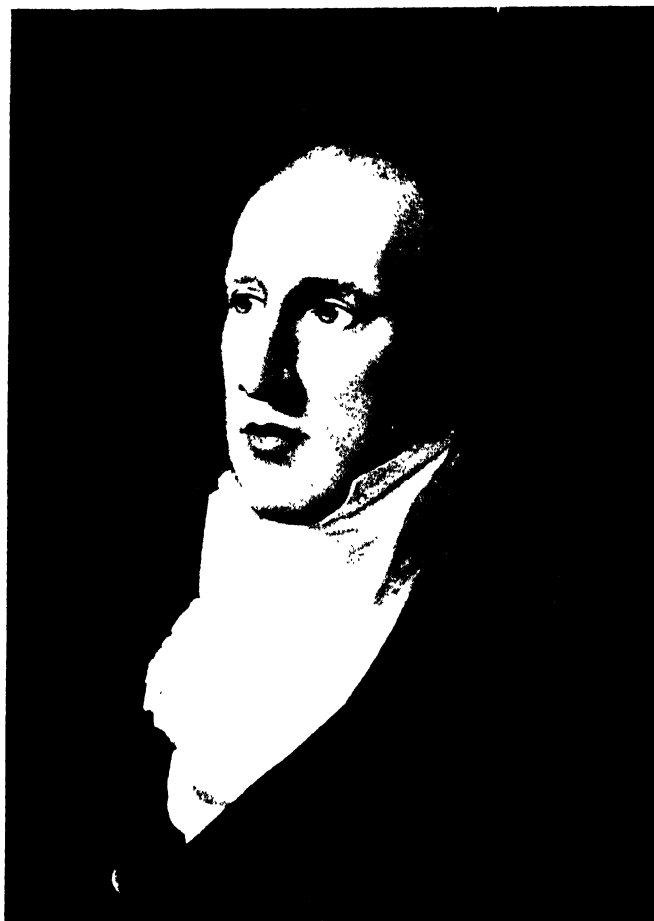
subsidized by the Government, were all unavailing to suppress its energy. The circulation rose early in 1794 to 4,300 and then to 4,600 ; and three or sometimes four presses were hard at work. Its popularity even stood in its way now and then, because other newspapers, with much smaller circulations, were able to work off second editions containing scraps of later news more quickly than THE TIMES could produce its larger quantities. But THE TIMES continued to get and to publish the pick of the news ; and in its New Year number of 1800 it was able to give a long list of important events on the Continent which it had been the first to announce in England.

Meanwhile, John Walter had been giving proofs of an independence which were a fit match for his energy. As early as 1786 he had been fined £150 for a libel in the *Daily Universal Register* against Lord Loughborough, the Lord Chief Justice. In 1789 he was unwise enough to let his paper say that the Dukes of York, Gloucester and Cumberland were insincere in their professions of joy at the recovery of the King from his attack of 1788. He was tried for libel and sentenced to a fine of £50, a year's imprisonment in Newgate (the felon's prison, not in the King's Bench), to stand in the pillory at Charing Cross for an hour (this part of the sentence seems not to have been exacted), and to other penalties. While he was in prison he was sentenced for two other libels : one accusing the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York of so demeaning themselves as to incur the disapprobation of his Majesty ; the other accusing the Duke of Clarence of leaving his Naval station without authority from the Admiralty or from his commanding officer. On each charge he was fined £100, and on the first condemned also to a year's imprisonment in Newgate. If John Walter may be believed (and his assertion was never doubted), the offence against the Prince of Wales was a trap into which he had been lured by a Treasury official. Reluctantly the Prince obtained his release after he had served 16 months of his sentence. He was considerably injured in health ; but this treatment by the Administration, which he had done his

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best to support, was of the very kind to stiffen the sinews and summon up the blood of this resolute man ; and undoubtedly it played its part in his determination to make THE TIMES fearless, independent, and omniscient. By 1795 the paper had an average sale of about 5,000 copies, and on New Year's Day, 1796, it claimed to be " by far the highest in circulation of any morning paper." When John Walter retired from work, and from his house in Printing House Square to his house in Teddington, he left a flourishing newspaper to one worthy of the charge.





JOHN WALTER THE SECOND (1776-1847).

## II

# EXPANSION

### 1802-1841

**H**IS successor was his younger son and namesake, John Walter II, who, in 1797 or 1798, had left Oxford, where he was studying with a view to Holy Orders, and came into the office of THE TIMES to help his father. In October, 1802, at the age of 26, he became Editor of the paper, and at the beginning of 1803 he became sole Manager as well. John Walter II was even more able, more determined and more courageous than his father ; and in his forty years and more of control THE TIMES became the most powerful newspaper, and, as some said, the greatest power in the country. It was a period of great events and of capital importance in the history of Europe and of civilization. In March, 1802, the war with France had been stayed by the Treaty of Amiens, only to break out anew in May, 1803, and to continue (except for the short interval of Napoleon's captivity on Elba in 1814-1815) till the Battle of Waterloo brought victory and peace. Between 1802 and 1841 the Slave Trade was abolished, and the slaves emancipated ; the Roman Catholics were relieved of their political and other disabilities ; the Luddite Riots, the Spa Fields Riots, the " massacre " of Peterloo, and many other outbreaks of sedition and violence revealed both the power and the weakness of the populace ; and the long agitation for the Reform of the House of Commons issued at last in the passing of the Reform Act of 1832.

It was a time during which there was greater need than usual of independent and upright criticism, to hold the balance between



tyranny and subversion ; and it was John Walter's ambition and achievement to make THE TIMES that standard. He acted consistently upon two main principles. One was that his paper must be free of all obligation to the Government. The other was that the public had a right to know all the news and to know it without delay. And for these principles he fought and schemed with matchless pertinacity and courage throughout a period in which a sorely-tried State controlled the Press with a tyranny easier to understand than to defend.

He began by supporting the Government, of which Addington (afterwards Lord Sidmouth) was head, but refused to accept their proffered subsidy. In 1804, Pitt returned to power, with Henry Dundas, Lord Melville, at the Admiralty ; and THE TIMES attacked Melville vigorously, both for his abortive expedition to blow up the French ships in Boulogne harbour and still more for his alleged peculation. The Government's reply was to deprive THE TIMES of all Government advertisements and John Walter of the post of printer to the Customs, which had been granted to his father eighteen years before. Early in his reign, moreover, he began a long and hazardous conflict with the Post Office. It had become the practice for the Comptroller and the resident Surveyor and Secretary to make large incomes by holding back and opening the foreign journals addressed to the English newspapers, translating and boiling down the news and selling this to the journals to whom of right the original papers belonged. For a time John Walter continued to pay the fixed sum demanded by these officials, although the news which they gave him in return was of no use to him. Then he revolted, and on being deprived by the Post Office of all his mails, set on foot device after device by which the journals might reach him in spite of the official ban. In 1807, he brought the matter to a head by striking at the Comptroller and the Surveyor openly in THE TIMES. His evidence was incomplete ; and when they sued him for libel he let the case go against him by default. A few months later he struck again, and proved the truth of his accusations. But by this time, the Government, which, after Pitt's death in January, 1806, had again tried to

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“ buy ” THE TIMES and again been rebuffed, was so puzzled and frightened by this new monster, a newspaper that was not venal, that it had begun seriously trying to kill it. In 1810, John Walter published a long account of the Government’s attempts to prevent his getting any news from abroad by stopping at the outports all packages addressed to him. And when he was told that he might have his packages “ as a favour,” he declined to accept them.

He proved too much for the Government. All this time he had been busy doing that which had never been done before, something which not only made the fortune of THE TIMES, and not only laid the foundations of all modern journalism, but also won freedom for the English Press. He had been organizing his own news service. There was no trick that he would not try, no means— from smugglers up to the Treasury letter-bag itself— that he would not use. Thus it was that (to give a few examples out of many) in 1805 THE TIMES gave the first news of the defeat of Mack at Ulm, of the Battle of Trafalgar and the death of Nelson, and of the Battle of Austerlitz ; in 1806 of the Battles of Jena and of Auerstadt ; in 1807 of the Battle of Friedland ; and in 1809 of the capture of Flushing, which THE TIMES announced forty-eight hours before the Government received its own news of the event.

John Walter II had very early begun to engage local correspondents all over the country ; he had his correspondents in France, and in 1807 he went a step further and dispatched Henry Crabb Robinson to Altona, and in 1808 to Spain, to act as war correspondent. The great and now renowned news service of THE TIMES had shown the power of its vigorous and adventurous youth ; and its rivals, *The Morning Chronicle* and *The Morning Post*, professed to be doubtful whether it was quite wise and quite gentlemanly to take so much trouble to tell people the truth, and to tell it quickly.

The struggle for independence and for news did not exhaust the energies of John Walter II. He was the first to make his newspaper both a guide and an expression of public opinion. Gradually the

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short notes of mingled news and comment came to expand, until the leading article reached its full stature. Crabb Robinson's diary lifts a corner of that veil of secrecy which John Walter always strove to preserve, in order that what THE TIMES said might be known (as it is to this day) for the opinion of THE TIMES, and not of this or that person. He shows us a young clergyman, one Peter Fraser, as the writer of "the great leader, the article that was talked about," and old William Combe, the author of "The Travels of Dr. Syntax," as Mr. Walter's general adviser. Another name soon to become known is that of Edward Sterling, who over the signature of "Vetus" contributed to THE TIMES in 1812 and 1813 several series of letters on war and politics, the effect of which may be gauged by the way in which Hazlitt raged at them in his "Thoughts on Political Affairs." (Already the Letters to the Editor were a prominent feature of THE TIMES, and "Vetus" was only one of several - Chrysal, Civis, Scotus, and the like—who were allowed two or three columns of the little paper to express their views in.) After the French war was over, Sterling was taken into the office as leader-writer; and it was his manner of writing and his use in an article of the phrase "we thundered forth the other day" which won for the paper the name of "The Thunderer." Another of these early and very slashing leader-writers (their violence would shock a modern reader) was John Stoddart. Stoddart was the first man to succeed John Walter as titular editor of the paper. His almost frantic hatred of Napoleon was valuable so long as the war was in progress. When it was over, his persistent violence and difficult disposition led to a break; and, pensioned off by Mr. Walter, he started a rival journal, which he called *The Day or New Times*. That was early in 1817. The vacant post of editor was offered first to Southey. When he declined it, John Walter looked among his own staff. His choice fell upon a contributor who belonged to the radical circle of John Hunt and Leigh Hunt and *The Examiner*, a man of 32 named Thomas Barnes.

Under Barnes, who was Editor from 1817 till 1841, THE TIMES definitely reached the position of "the leading journal of Europe."

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When Barnes came into power, the mechanical side of the journal had been brought by John Walter to the highest point of efficiency then possible. He was a man who knew printing at first hand. One morning, he being then nearly 60 and a Member of Parliament, finding himself alone in the office when some important news arrived from France, he translated the dispatch and set it up himself with the help of a single compositor. And, in 1810, by working for thirty-six hours at a stretch with a few apprentices and unemployed printers, he wrecked a strike of his compositors and brought out the paper as usual—an example which was to be followed on the same spot 116 years later in the General Strike. The increasing circulation of THE TIMES and the necessity of delivering it as early in the day as possible made it imperative to find some quicker way of printing than the old hand-press ; and such a way was, after much research, discovered and fostered by John Walter. He installed two of the steam-presses invented by Koenig. There was need of the greatest secrecy, for these were days when workmen feared and hated machinery, and Koenig and his presses had already been threatened with violence. And on the morning of November 29, 1814, Mr. Walter went into the press-room and showed his astonished workmen the first newspaper ever printed by steam. The Koenig press could print in an hour eleven hundred copies of the single four-page sheet of which THE TIMES then consisted, and that, little though it seems (the modern press can print a thirty-two-page paper at the rate of 25,000 copies an hour), was four times as many as the hand-press could do. And in 1827 while Barnes was still in the Editorial chair, two engineers on the staff of THE TIMES, Applegath and Cowper, installed their new press, which could print up to 5,000 copies an hour.

Thomas Barnes, therefore, was in command of a very vigorous and efficient power, and he made good use of it. Himself a weighty and cultivated writer, he engaged others, at sums then considered very large, to support him. Among these were Lord Brougham, with whom, however, Barnes afterwards violently quarrelled, and Benjamin Disraeli, whose articles signed "Runnymede" in 1836

attacked the Government of Lord Melbourne and defended his own peculiar kind of historical Toryism. Under Barnes—with Edward Sterling probably often at his elbow—the independent politics of the paper puzzled some and enraged others. Its general trend was towards Toryism ; but it ardently supported the opponents of slavery ; upheld the cause of Queen Caroline against King George IV and Lord Liverpool's Government ; and, when once it had chosen its side, it backed the Reform Bill with all its strength, and advocated, against all the Tory journals, the repeal of the Corn Laws. Having supported Lord Grey's administration over Reform, it went against it both over the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 and over Irish Coercion. And at the end of 1834, when Peel and Wellington formed their administration on the dismissal of Melbourne, THE TIMES, heedless of the loss of circulation and revenue which such a course must entail, solidly supported the new Ministry through its brief career. Throughout this period there is plenty of evidence, in the Greville memoirs and elsewhere, of the power of the journal in practical politics. On one occasion, in 1840, Lord Durham, " the proudest man in England," called in person on Barnes to ask him a favour on behalf of King Leopold of Belgium. Ministers gave the paper exclusive information, which in some cases was unknown even to their colleagues. The support of THE TIMES was solicited by different administrations ; and in 1834 the Lord Chancellor, Lord Lyndhurst, declaring, " Why, Barnes is the most powerful man in the country ! " conducted with him prolonged negotiations over the political terms on which the Government could secure the friendship of the paper. So great was the change which THE TIMES had made in the position of the Press, since the repression and tyranny of the days of King George III and of King George IV.

This political power, which could afford to be independent of party and even of public favour, was based very firmly on several other foundations of journalism which John Walter and Barnes were too wise to neglect. The most important of these was the service of news, which continued to be better than any other journal had either





Printing House Square 65 years ago, looking North.



Printing House Square present day, looking North-East.

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the means or the energy to provide. "It is in vain to look for private or official information," wrote Greville, "for THE TIMES always has the latest and the best." Another strong point was the quality and quantity of the advertisements: whatever line the paper took over public affairs, it was known to be the best medium for the best kind of commercial announcement. In 1824 it was stated to be "the greatest advertising vehicle in Britain." With Thomas Moore and Macaulay contributing verses, and Thackeray among the writers of the reviews of books, which during Barnes's reign acquired increasing importance, literature and the arts, including the theatre, received considerable attention. Not for some years yet was THE TIMES to be called "the organ of the City"; but it shared with *The Morning Herald* the credit of having set on foot the City article. Growing out of detached notes warning the public against the wild speculation in the post-war period, this City article became a prominent and much trusted feature. In 1840, the year before Barnes's death, THE TIMES succeeded in exposing, at great expense, a gigantic scheme of international forgery. Tablets in the Royal Exchange and over the entrance door on the north side of Printing House Square record the gratitude of the commercial community; and, since Mr. Walter declined to have his expenses made good, the money subscribed was used to found certain scholarships in the name of THE TIMES.

In May, 1841, Thomas Barnes died, in harness. From the last years of the "old, mad, blind" King George III, through the very stormy waters of the reigns of King George IV and King William IV, he had driven his ship along under full sail. When the great and prosperous era of the Queen was still, like herself, very young, he passed out, to be succeeded by a youngster of 23, John Thadeus Delane.



### III

## THE SPACIOUS DAYS

### 1841-1901

**D**ELANE'S father was Manager of THE TIMES, and the young man, on leaving Oxford, had been employed in the office as Parliamentary reporter and in other ways for about ten months, when he was suddenly called upon to assume the control. For six years he had at his back the energy and the long experience of John Walter II, slightly discounted, perhaps, by the political prejudice which marked the last years of the great man. But Delane from the start was able and willing to assume responsibility. He was already a man of great sagacity, unshakeable courage, and keen intelligence ; he had a gift for inspiring confidence and for making friends in high places, and in the best sense he was a thorough man of the world. Barnes had been rather Bohemian. Delane was very sociable and very welcome in the best society. " He felt it to be a duty to consort with the inner circle of cabinets and to mix in the great world " ; and " he was in the confidence of everybody of both political parties." He had, therefore, sources of information and of influence which were denied even to Barnes. Statesmen of all political complexions, Aberdeen, Palmerston, Granville, Clarendon, Gladstone, Disraeli, Salisbury, all consulted him. He was equally welcome at the great Liberal and the great Tory houses ; Lord Torrington, the Duchess of Sutherland, and Lady Ely sent him news from the Court ; and the Emperor of the French himself sent him private and very important communications. And besides these gifts and advantages he had an enormous capacity for work. He

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would leave the office at five o'clock in the morning and be back again before noon. He wrote and received innumerable letters, and paid and received innumerable visits. These labours wore him out by the time he was sixty ; but he had used all his opportunities and powers to extend the prosperity and the influence of the great force which he took over from Barnes.

In the period of his rule, from 1841 to 1877, when he retired, were the spacious days of THE TIMES. " This country is ruled by THE TIMES ! " cries a furious opponent. " THE TIMES has passed sentence of death on the Administration, and it is most likely that it will be executed speedily " thus wrote Lord John Russell to Charles Greville on the eve of his resignation in February, 1851. " THE TIMES," wrote Edward Ellice in a report on the Press prepared for Lord John Russell in 1855, " has become omnipotent and despotic from the consummate ability with which it is conducted."

In that year, 1855, Parliament took off the last penny of the stamp duty on newspapers, which, imposed in 1711, had risen during the French wars to 4d. The relief was originally designed, without concealment, as a blow against THE TIMES, that " huge monopolist, using and abusing its authority and influence in propounding mischievous doctrines "— especially, at that moment, the doctrine that, having gone into the Crimean War, the country might as well fight its hardest. The repeal of the stamp duty was followed in 1861, after a fierce struggle, by the abolition of the duty on paper. Between them these two measures inaugurated a new era in journalism, in which many new and low-priced journals came to appeal to the rapidly growing reading public. The circulation of THE TIMES had risen under Delane's control from about 30,000 to twice that number in 1855—that is, nearly three times as much as all its five daily competitors put together. In 1855 THE TIMES (which, in 1815, had cost as much as 7d.) lowered its price from 5d. to 4d., and in 1861 from 4d. to 3d. ; but even so the ratio naturally could not be preserved under the new competition. Nevertheless, the circulation rose in the Crimean War to more than 70,000, and never fell in Delane's days

to less than 50,000 ; and as to its power, a writer in 1871 could say :—  
 “ THE TIMES may indeed be called the Monarch of the Press. Being supreme in the control of that mighty world power, Mr. Delane may be said to possess an empire which is co-extensive with the area of civilisation.”

Among the many notable passages in the history of Delane's editorship, that of the Crimean War is, perhaps rightly, the most famous. The paper had always been distrustful of Louis Napoleon, and that distrust had induced it to detail correspondents to send exact news of the actual state of the French army and navy ; and almost alone in the country THE TIMES had gone on demanding that the English national defences should be rescued from the inefficiency into which they had drifted after Waterloo was fought and won. But it was far from being bellicose, whether against or in alliance with France. In 1853 its Constantinople Correspondent had been rapped over the knuckles by Delane for being too Turkish in sympathy ; and the journal's policy was to keep the peace if possible. But in February, 1854, the French and English Governments sent their joint ultimatum to the Czar. The Czar received it first, not in the official copy but in THE TIMES. Delane had obtained the text of it and had determined, Cabinet secret though it was, that immediate knowledge of it would be “ useful to the public and to Europe.” This was characteristic of him ; and so it was to go down to the House of Lords to listen to the furious attacks there made on him for having done so. Knowing war to be inevitable, he had made his plans. “ The public wants details, and details it shall have ! ” he declared ; and his plans were on a scale hitherto unparalleled. To Constantinople he sent a young man very learned in all things Turkish, who had but recently left Oxford, Thomas Chenery (of whom more will be heard) ; to the Turkish Army under Omar Pasha he sent Laurence Oliphant, whose acquaintance he had recently made through his admiration for Oliphant's book about the Russian shores of the Black Sea ; to Varna another correspondent ; to Silistria another. With the fleet he had General Ebers ; with the Army of

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the East he sent one of his Parliamentary staff, who had done good work as special correspondent in his native Ireland during the famine of 1845. This was William Howard Russell ; and it was Russell who with ruthless candour and vigour showed up the now notorious faults in the equipment of the troops and the conduct of the war. The outcry at home against this exposure of the truth was violent ; but Delane (who himself, with Kinglake and Layard for companions, went to the seat of war in the autumn of 1854) backed Russell up through thick and thin ; and it was largely through his force and pertinacity in demanding preparations for the winter campaign and a more powerful prosecution of the war that the correspondent who had narrated the sufferings of the troops was also able to narrate their victories. Mainly through Russell's articles, England became aware of the horrible truth about the condition of the sick and wounded ; and Miss Florence Nightingale was moved to go upon her mission. THE TIMES itself started one of its great relief funds (it was not the first of these funds, since the paper had raised much money for the relief of the Irish in the potato famine) and sent out one of its staff, John C. Macdonald, to administer it. Lord Sidney Godolphin Osborne, then a regular writer on the paper, followed ; and at Scutari they were joined by Miss Nightingale. The fund amounted to nearly £25,000, and the unexpended balance, amounting to £10,000, was later employed to found the Corps of Commissionaires.

The misconduct of the war brought Lord Aberdeen's Government down ; and Lord Palmerston entered on his first administration. Then began the gradual reconciliation of two former political enemies, Palmerston and Delane, which led to a personal friendship and a fairly close political alliance. Delane, like Barnes, had a way of taking his own course and holding aloof from party ties ; and, like Barnes, he was often accused of inconsistency and tergiversation. On the whole, the policy of the paper, while he controlled it, might be described as Palmerstonian Liberal, not Gladstonian, and not Tory. Very early in his editorship he had to declare his policy on the repeal of the Corn Laws. Since 1839 THE TIMES had been in favour

of that repeal ; and under Delane it so far agreed with Cobdenism as to condemn the sliding scale proposed by Peel and to advocate the entire abolition of the duties on imported grain. (Twenty years later Cobden made a violently abusive series of personal attacks upon Delane, in the course of which he stated that THE TIMES had unscrupulously opposed Free Trade, which was the exact opposite of the truth.) In 1845, when Peel had come round to complete abolition, his Cabinet was divided between Peelites and Protectionists, and none knew which would prevail. Intense excitement was caused, therefore, on December 4th, by an announcement in THE TIMES to the effect that Parliament would meet in the first week in January, and that the Queen's Speech would recommend an immediate consideration of the Corn Laws, preparatory to their total repeal. The statement was ridiculed and denied, and the wildest stories were circulated about how THE TIMES had obtained the news. Among those stories the best known is that which George Meredith adapted for his novel, "Diana of the Crossways"—that the news had been wheedled out of Sidney Herbert (a member of the Government) by the beautiful and unhappy Mrs. Caroline Norton (later a reviewer of books for THE TIMES) and had been sold by her to Delane for money. The fact was that Lord Aberdeen had told Delane a portion of the truth for the purpose of bringing the matter to a crisis. By publishing it instantly THE TIMES forced the hand of the Government ; and after Peel had resigned and almost immediately resumed office the measure was carried.

There were other occasions on which Delane made prompt use of the facilities for getting news with which the organization of THE TIMES and his personal relations with leaders in politics and society furnished him. In a special Sunday issue on February 27th, 1848, THE TIMES announced, before the Government knew of it, the abdication of King Louis Philippe and the proclamation of a Republic. In 1849 a chance remark heard in the hunting field proved to Delane that Palmerston was conniving at the sending of arms from England to the insurgents in Sicily ; and his prompt exposure of the

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truth forced Palmerston to a public apology. In 1854, on the eve of the Crimean War, in spite of the unusual precautions taken by the Government to keep the terms of the Queen's Speech a secret, Delane obtained a copy and published it. On January 17th, 1856, *THE TIMES*, in a second edition, announced, before the Government knew it, that the Russians had accepted the proposals for peace. In 1857 Delane is found giving Palmerston the benefit of his private information from India, in which the Mutiny was pretty clearly foreshadowed. In June, 1864, *THE TIMES* announced, in anticipation, the Government decision not to enter the war with Denmark against Prussia. In 1870, shortly after the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, Delane got hold of and published a treaty formerly projected between France and Prussia, whereby Prussia was to have connived, on certain terms, at France's absorption of Belgium. The result of the exposure was to impel the Government to make the treaty with France and Germany to secure the neutrality of Belgium.

Delane's long-standing distrust of Napoleon III led him to support the German side in the Franco-Prussian War; and his shrewdness led him to foretell the German victory. He sent Russell to be War Correspondent with the army of the then Crown Prince of Prussia, and was indignant when the Government refused to allow a soldier, Sir Henry Hozier, also to accompany the Prussian forces, for fear of offending Napoleon III. During the siege of Paris *THE TIMES* was smuggled into the city by many clever devices. One of the cleverest was that by which two pages of *THE TIMES*, containing many messages from friends outside to those in the beleaguered city, were photographed on very thin paper and reduced to about the size of a postage stamp. These photographs were sent to Bordeaux and thence by pigeon post to Paris, where they were enlarged through a magic lantern, and the messages were copied and distributed. Russell was in Paris after the capitulation and described the outbreak of the Commune; Chenery was sent over to watch the developments of the Commune, and Delane himself went over after it. It was in the

following year that a special wire was installed from Paris to THE TIMES Office, which was in those days regarded as an unparalleled feature in journalistic enterprise ; and it was then also that Delane first met a very remarkable man, M. de Blowitz, who was acting as assistant to the Paris Correspondent. Blowitz gave his Editor a taste of his quality on that occasion. Together they heard a speech by Thiers. Delane regretted that it could not appear complete in next morning's TIMES. That night he crossed to England, and on opening his TIMES the next morning he found the speech in it at great length. Blowitz had written it down from memory and telegraphed it over in time. Only in one great matter, indeed, did Delane and THE TIMES take what is now seen to have been the wrong side. When civil war broke out in America in 1861 the paper, with nearly all upper and middle class England, sided with the South. "THE TIMES," said President Lincoln to William Howard Russell, who had gone out as War Correspondent, "is the most powerful thing in the world, except, perhaps, the Mississippi," and he felt sore that it was turned against him. But there is no doubt that Delane, like many others, was misinformed and indifferently served by those whom he trusted.

The leading article continued to increase in importance. Delane's practice was to publish four in every number, and it was calculated that he was responsible for more than 40,000 of them. He wrote scarcely any himself, but he put the finishing touches to nearly all. Among his many leader-writers were Henry Reeve ("Il Pomposo," as they called him), the friend of Charles Greville, Robert Lowe, afterwards Lord Sherbrooke, Thomas Mozley, Chenery, Henry Wace, afterwards Dean of Canterbury, Roundell Palmer, afterwards Lord Selborne, J. A. Roebuck, the great Liberal, George Brodrick, afterwards Warden of Merton College, Oxford, and Leonard Courtney, afterwards Lord Courtney of Penwith. Among other contributors in various capacities were Disraeli, Vernon Harcourt, Mark Pattison, and Kinglake. And in other respects the quality of the paper was steadily improved and its contents enriched with variety. The City article and commercial news acquired increasing importance, and it







JOHN WALTER THE THIRD (1818-1894).

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was widely noted that, during the mania for speculating in railway shares in 1845-6, THE TIMES persistently and earnestly denounced in its editorial columns a folly which was bringing it in an advertisement revenue of £4,000 to £5,000 a week. Such articles as those which Thomas Campbell Foster wrote on Irish agriculture during the famine of 1845-6, and those which James Caird, assisted by John C. Macdonald, wrote about their tour of inspection of English agriculture in 1850 and 1851, had more than an ephemeral value. Book reviews played an increasing part. It was but natural that Disraeli's novels should be noticed at length, but the giving of three columns to Meredith's "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel" in 1859 is an event worth noting. THE TIMES was the first paper to have a trained and regular music critic; and the despotic James Davison filled that post, John Oxenford being the dramatic critic and Tom Taylor the art critic. For sport it will be sufficient to mention the famous description of the Sayers and Heenan fight and Admiral Rous's articles on old-time racing at Newmarket. It was in 1855 that Bulwer Lytton said that if he desired to leave to remote posterity some memorial of existing civilization he would prefer, not docks, nor railways, nor public buildings, nor even the Palace of Westminster, but a file of THE TIMES; and his choice would only have been the better justified as time went on.

All this meant that the paper was increasing in size. On June 21st, 1861, it rose for the first time to twenty-four pages, with 144 columns and 4,000 advertisements. The sale of the number of March 11th, 1863, describing the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales (later King Edward and Queen Alexandra) amounted to 112,000. Fortunately in John Walter III, son and successor of John Walter II, THE TIMES had a proprietor with a keen practical interest in the printing side of the enterprise. In 1848 there was installed in THE TIMES Office Applegath's first rotary machine, which could print 10,000 copies of the four-page paper in an hour. In 1857 came the first Hoe machine, an American development of the rotary, which could print 20,000 sheets an hour. And then in 1866, after four

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years of experiment in the printing office in Printing House Square, John C. Macdonald, the Manager of THE TIMES, and the chief engineer, J. Calverley, patented the famous Walter Press, which remained in use up to 1895, and could print 10,000 or 12,000 copies of the complete paper in an hour.

When Delane retired in the autumn of 1877, "Who," asked Lord Beaconsfield, "will undertake the social part of the business? Who will go about in the world and do all that Mr. Delane did so well?" It was a shrewd question. Delane's successor, Thomas Chenery, was a very learned man and a very able man, who as Special Correspondent and as leader-writer had done first-rate work for the paper; but he had not Delane's social qualities, nor his decision of character. In politics he was rather more of a Conservative than Delane had been; but, when Gladstone came into power in 1880, Abraham Hayward, who had had some influence with Delane, tried, not without success, to enlist the sympathy of THE TIMES on behalf of the Government, and its support was pretty consistently given, except where the Government's proceedings in South Africa, Ireland, or at home demanded rebuke. In Chenery's reign the most spectacular character on THE TIMES was its Paris Correspondent, Henri de Blowitz, the little man with the big head, whose genius for getting news was only equalled by his skill in sifting out the truth and his resolution in publishing it. Among his many triumphs (which included interviews with Pope Leo XIII and with the Sultan Abdul Hamid) the chief was his obtaining the text of the treaty of Berlin in 1878, which, together with the preamble, all appeared in THE TIMES on the morning of the day on which it was signed in Berlin. But M. de Blowitz was not unique. After a debate in the House of Commons on South Africa in May, 1879, Sir Michael Hicks Beach writes to Sir Bartle Frere, "As usual, THE TIMES gives the only good report."

In 1879 Printing House Square was once more the source of origin of a great improvement in printing. Till that year all type had to be set up by hand, each unit being taken from the case and

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put into the printer's stick by hand. In that year Charles Kastenbein, a German, working in THE TIMES Office, perfected a type-setting machine which could set up 298 lines of the paper, amounting to nearly 17,000 separate types, in an hour ; and this machine was in use until another former TIMES printer, William Wicks, invented his rotary machine for type-setting, which was brought into use under Chenery's successor.

Chenery died in February, 1884, and the editorship was once more entrusted to a young man. John Walter II had been 26, Barnes 32, Delane 23. Mr. George Earle Buckle, a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, and a member of the staff of THE TIMES, was 29 when he was appointed to the control ; and his assistant-Editor, Mr. J. B. Capper, was also young. It is unnecessary to say that THE TIMES had little sympathy with the Liberal Government's mismanagement of affairs in the Sudan, which led to the fall of Khartoum and the death of General Gordon. In the winter of 1885-86, to the general consternation, came the announcement of Mr. Gladstone's adoption of Home Rule for Ireland ; and THE TIMES at once constituted itself the centre of resistance, encouraged the Whig Lord Hartington and the Radical Joseph Chamberlain to come out against their leader, and was greatly responsible for the formation of the Liberal Unionist party. The first Home Rule Bill was defeated in the Commons in 1886 ; but the efforts of the paper did not relax, and the second Home Rule Bill was thrown out by the Lords in 1893. Meanwhile, the staff of THE TIMES was strengthened by the coming of a very able, very well-informed and very trenchant writer, John Woulfe Flanagan, whose articles entitled " Parnellism and Crime " revived the downrightness and vehemence of THE TIMES in former days. These articles began in March, 1887 ; and that year and the two following years made up the troubled period in which the publication of a forged letter attributed to Parnell and other attacks on Irish leaders for countenancing and abetting crime led to the Parnell Commission. The findings of that Commission established the truth of a great part of the charges made by THE TIMES, while

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showing also that in that period of fierce political passions and of widespread corruption and intrigue it had been the victim of contaminated sources of information.

Very soon after Gladstone's resignation on the defeat of his Home Rule Bill in 1886 the Editor of THE TIMES had occasion to show the old independence. On the night of December 22nd, 1886, Lord Randolph Churchill, leader of the House of Commons in Lord Salisbury's Government, came to THE TIMES Office and told Mr. Buckle that he had resigned, as he was not supported in a policy of retrenchment. In return for this important and exclusive piece of news he hoped for friendly treatment in the paper's comment on it. But the Editor did not conceal his disapproval of Lord Randolph's action, and told him that if he gave the news to THE TIMES there could be no bargaining about the paper's comment on it. Lord Randolph, not without a grumble, left the news, and next morning found himself rebuked for dealing so serious a blow at the Unionist Government and cause, of which THE TIMES was the chief pillar in the Press.

The century drew to a close ; and so did the life of the Great Queen. In the Boer War, with Mr. L. S. Amery, Colonel Lionel James and the late W. F. Monypenny as its chief correspondents in South Africa, THE TIMES was able to maintain its tradition for the quickest and fullest publication of the real news, and when the war was over Mr. Amery edited the seven volumes of " THE TIMES History of the War in South Africa, 1899-1902," which is the standard work on the subject.

The Queen died on January 22nd, 1901, and with her passed a great era. In those spacious days the Walters had built their great house at Bear Wood in Berkshire, and on the site of the old King's printing-house in Blackfriars had arisen the huge offices of THE TIMES, all built of material from Bear Wood, in which steam printing and machine casting and the electric light had been installed before any other newspaper had them, and daily a journal the size of which would have amazed John Walter II and Barnes was turned out in

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quantities that would to them have seemed incredible. THE TIMES, having first conquered all its early rivals and attained an unparalleled degree of power and prosperity, now found itself in a new world, with a new sort of journalism springing up all about it for the benefit of the new reading public.

# IV

## NEW METHODS IN THE NEW CENTURY

### 1901-1914

**F**OR more than thirty years John Walter III employed as business manager of the paper Mowbray Morris, who had married one of Delane's sisters. Morris was succeeded, as manager, by John C. Macdonald; and Macdonald, who died in 1889, was succeeded by a very remarkable man, C. F. Moberly Bell. Bell had been a Correspondent of THE TIMES in Egypt for more than twenty years, when he was summoned to help in the control of the journal to which his life and strength were devoted. That was in March, 1890. THE TIMES was entering on the most difficult period of its career since its infant struggles a century before; and for twenty-one years Moberly Bell laboured and schemed and fought in its behalf, until he fell dead at his desk in Printing House Square on a cold April morning in 1911.

He found the finances of the journal in confusion, caused not by any decrease in public favour, but by the enormous cost of the Parnell Commission, by too lavish expenditure on very large papers, and by unbusiness-like methods. Moberly Bell's first task was to restore order; his next to maintain it. This became more difficult as time went on.

At his death in 1894 the third John Walter was succeeded as principal proprietor by his second son, Arthur Walter (his eldest son John having been drowned in an ice accident at Bear Wood); but while the premises in Printing House Square and the printing business belonged to Arthur Walter and his half-brother Godfrey Walter,

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THE TIMES itself was owned by a private partnership, in which about one hundred partners, beside the two Walters, had an interest. Under an old contract, the printing of the paper must be done by the Walter Press ; there was no method by which Bell could either get the cost reduced or *have the machinery replaced by the newest and best*. For the first time in its history THE TIMES had ceased to be in the van of the art and craft of printing—and this just in the era when the competition of the cheaper newspapers became most active, both through their merit and through the efficiency and speed of their production.

Moberly Bell was as jealous for the quality of THE TIMES as he was for its success. He was determined that it should sacrifice none of its ideals, nor compromise in the slightest degree with the demands of the new public. Himself once a Foreign Correspondent of the journal, he devoted particular care to the foreign department. In 1891 he brought Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, who had served THE TIMES at St. Petersburg and Constantinople, home to be head of the foreign department ; Sir Valentine Chirol and Miss Flora Shaw (Lady Lugard) were among his recruits ; and he lent the support of the paper to travellers like Dr. G. E. Morrison "of Peking," Lord Curzon and Sir Francis Younghusband, who could keep THE TIMES informed of the East, its peoples and its ways. Among the home appointments due to him were those of W. F. Monypenny, Mr. L. S. Amery and Mr. B. L. Richmond. It was in these years that the sporting department was entirely revised, and that important cricket matches were first reported in large type ; and the engagement of A. B. Walkley as dramatic critic brought the theatre to the front of the news. It was in Moberly Bell's time also that the LITERARY SUPPLEMENT came into being (with Mr. Richmond then, as now, in charge of it) and also THE ENGINEERING SUPPLEMENT and THE FINANCIAL and COMMERCIAL SUPPLEMENT, of which the first survives, and the last was suspended on the outbreak of the War.

In politics the paper continued its independent course. In 1906, for instance, it warmly supported the Territorial Scheme, which was

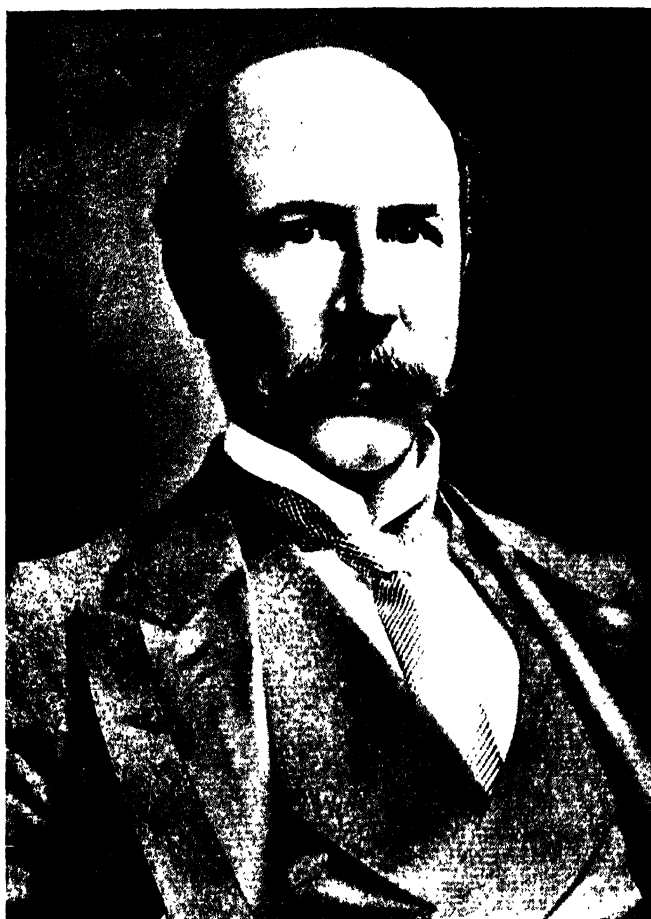


a Liberal measure ; and on one occasion the Editor received a personal letter of thanks from Queen Victoria for a leading article on a matter touching the honour of the Royal Family. But while Mr. Buckle and Moberly Bell were thus succeeding, in the new era, in maintaining the best traditions and qualities of the old, there was no respite in the struggle to pay the heavy expenses and to make a profitable business of journalism of this standard. The task would have been easier if they had been able to present their first-class material in a more attractive form, and with more of the consistent and systematic arrangement which marked the "make-up" of the younger journals.

Moberly Bell's mind turned to outside sources of revenue, which might be made to pay for maintaining the quality of THE TIMES. He took part in a great scheme for a new edition of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" ; he brought out a TIMES Atlas, an edition of "The First Fifty Years of Punch," a "Century Dictionary." He embarked also upon a scheme by which regular subscribers to THE TIMES should get it for a trifle above 2d. daily, instead of the regular 3d. ; and last he helped to found THE TIMES Book Club, which in its early years was to involve the paper in a long and embittered conflict with the publishers and booksellers.

This heroic struggle won its success. The revenue was larger than it had been for many years, when a little event which scarcely anybody noticed ushered in a dramatic change. The holder of the smallest interest among the one hundred or so into which the ownership of the journal was divided brought an action against the principal proprietor, asking to see some accounts of revenue and expenditure and to be relieved of the indefinite liabilities of an unincorporated partnership. A few months later, he and others with him changed their demand, and asked for a dissolution of partnership. The Court granted it, and inevitably ordered with it a sale of the assets, property and effects. That was in July, 1907. After one hundred and twenty-two years, THE TIMES was for sale.





ARTHUR FRASER WALTER (1846-1910).

Mr. Arthur Walter's first attempt was to form a new company, of which the Managing Director was to be C. Arthur Pearson (then owner of *Pearson's Weekly* and other journals and later the blind Baronet who conducted St. Dunstan's for the blinded soldiers in the War). On January 7, 1908, a notice to this effect was published in *THE TIMES*. Not a word about it had been said to Mr. Buckle nor to Moberly Bell ; and Bell, so soon as he had recovered from the stunning blow, told Mr. Walter that he intended to work against the Pearson scheme. It was by no means too late, for the announcement was premature, and amounted indeed to contempt of Court, since it had not the sanction of the Court of Chancery. And while Moberly Bell was consulting Lord Cromer and other friends about a means of raising the necessary money without committing *THE TIMES* to a policy of free trade or pro-Germanism or some such particular interest, he found himself in touch with Lord Northcliffe, still in those days better known as Alfred Harmsworth, founder of *The Daily Mail*.

Lord Northcliffe wanted to own *THE TIMES*. He wanted the position as the blue ribbon of newspaper ownership in the whole world. He wanted the paper perhaps still more, as the most powerful weapon he could think of against the ambitions of Germany, with the menace of which his mind was already preoccupied. But very shrewdly, he did not want to be known, just yet, to own *THE TIMES* ; and Moberly Bell, naturally nervous about new forces which he had had no opportunity of gauging, was of a mind to keep Northcliffe not only out of the public eye but out of control of the paper's policy. The desire for secrecy on both sides led to negotiations which were conducted like something in the life of Blowitz or in an adventure story. Northcliffe ostentatiously went abroad for a rest. Motor-cars would stop near lanes in Hampstead where two men would walk up and down—Northcliffe and Bell, conspirators only lacking cloaks, masks and pistols. But Northcliffe had the money, and that was what the Court of Chancery was most concerned to know. He had also complete confidence in the probity of Moberly Bell, who, as he had not failed to notice, had forgotten to make any conditions

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about himself. So Lord Northcliffe paid £320,000 into the Bank of England in the name of Moberly Bell, and the controlling interest in THE TIMES became Lord Northcliffe's, with Mr. Arthur Walter as Chairman of the Company.

The agreement was, in effect, that the new proprietor should leave the editorial policy of the paper entirely alone. And for some time, partly owing to his ill-health and partly to the fascination which the details of newspaper production exercised over him, Northcliffe was content with bringing the equipment of the office up to modern needs. THE TIMES was transformed by the genius of one who, whatever history may say of his effect upon English journalism, was an unrivalled pioneer in the art of presenting it attractively. The newest and best of printing machinery was brought in ; and tales are told of incredible swiftness in the installation of the giant Goss presses which could print a thirty-two-page paper at the rate of 25,000 copies an hour ; and the Monotype composing machines replaced the old Kastenbein and Wicks. And a systematic effort was made to recover the advertisements, which through want of system and enterprise had been lost to THE TIMES in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Lord Northcliffe's early pride in the dignity of THE TIMES did not include any illusions about its being too august to compete for public support.

Speaking broadly, his aim was to make THE TIMES for the public of his day what John Walter II had made THE TIMES for the public of a century before. The foundations must be the newest news and the most efficient production. But it was not to be expected that the new proprietor, with his passion for journalism, would always be content to leave the direction of the paper to others. Little by little (and partly spurred on by his intense apprehension of the threat from Germany) Northcliffe took a larger hand in editorial matters. And it so happened that time and death and change in the old staff left vacancies which he could fill as he thought best. In 1910 Mr. Arthur Walter died ; in 1911 Moberly Bell, in 1912 Mr. Monypenny. In 1912 also Mr. Buckle, after twenty-eight years as



LORD NORTHCLIFFE.



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Editor, retired, a few weeks before the 40,000th number of THE TIMES was published, with a special supplement on Printing. The resignations of Mr. Capper and Sir Valentine Chirol were given in the same year, and Mr. Richmond devoted his whole time to the *Literary Supplement*. Mr. Buckle was succeeded by the present Editor, Mr. Geoffrey Dawson (like his predecessor a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford), who had been for some years private secretary to Lord Milner in South Africa, and for five years editor of the *Johannesburg Star*. New methods and new men had come to Printing House Square ; and THE TIMES had begun anew to make its appeal to a public which corresponded, for all its immensely greater size, to the public of the heyday of John Walter and of Barnes. A sign of the new age was a reduction in price. On May 5th, 1913, THE TIMES was sold, for the first time in its history, at 2d. Less than a year later, on March 16th, 1914, it was reduced to 1d. In one night the circulation was more than trebled. And it was with a daily circulation of 150,000 that this vast power, with all the weight of its old tradition and all the force of its new energy and efficiency, faced the tremendous era of 1914-1918.



## V

# THE GREAT WAR AND AFTER 1914-1922

**I**N the spring of 1914 the new organization was put to a slight test by the threat of civil war in Ireland ; and special correspondents, an ocean-going steamer kept at full steam in Donaghadee harbour, a special train at Holyhead and a service of motor-cars and motor-bicycles showed that the tradition of unequalled news-service had not been lost.

When the War came, however, it seemed at first as if all this preparation was to be useless. In the early months the view both of the Government and of the Army was that the public ought to be told as little as possible, partly in order to prevent panic, and partly for fear of giving information to the enemy. THE TIMES correspondents, therefore, were continually in trouble with the authorities, and every difficulty was put in their way. Very soon, too, there came more serious trouble with the Censorship of the Press, which the Government had established at home. Early in the evening of Saturday, August 29th, 1914, a dispatch written the same morning by one of the war correspondents of THE TIMES at Amiens was brought to the office. It described, in terms which were afterwards found to be very moderate, the retreat from Mons. The extreme gravity of its contents was at once apparent to the Editor and to the Chief of the Foreign Department, to whom it was referred. Certain passages, which they thought obviously dangerous, were cut out, and the dispatch was sent, as duty demanded, to the Press Bureau. It

was never expected that such news as was therein contained would be passed for public information ; but some two hours later the dispatch was returned. Mr. F. E. Smith (afterwards Lord Birkenhead), who was then the head of the Press Bureau, had restored some of the passages which the Editor had cut out ; he had cut out others ; he had added sentences all his own. He had, in fact, very carefully edited the dispatch ; and with it he sent a private note to the Editor begging him to publish the news in the form which it had now assumed. And on the following morning, Sunday, August 30th (in the first four months of the War THE TIMES regularly published a Sunday Edition), his orders were obeyed.

The outcry was tremendous. The public could hardly believe the news ; newspapers which had been less well served by their correspondents professed to be outraged by such indiscretion ; and Parliament took notice of the affair. In the House of Commons the head of the Press Bureau nobly shouldered all the blame, but omitted to mention the cardinal facts that he had very carefully edited and altered the dispatch, and that he had pressed THE TIMES to publish it. Even so, however, enough of the truth was made known to vindicate the paper's action and to bring it handsome apologies from the more reputable of its critics. One purpose more was served to some extent by the affair and its consequences. It brought to the Government and to the Army a much-needed proof that the truth, so far from alarming the public, stiffened its sinews to resistance.

Of the news service of THE TIMES during the War it must be sufficient here to say that the paper had correspondents (among them Sir Harry Perry Robinson and Mr. Gerald Campbell) at all the fronts and also in all countries of the world ; and that with a staff very much diminished it "carried on" with unresting vigour. In its comments, moreover, it both led and expressed the soundest public opinion on the conduct of national affairs. It began by pressing for the appointment of Lord Kitchener as Secretary of State for War. In May, 1915, THE TIMES first attracted attention to the desperate need of munitions and forced the truth upon a too optimistic people ; it

## THE TIMES PAST PRESENT FUTURE

urged the creation of a Ministry of Munitions, and pointed to Mr. Lloyd George as the right man to be at the head of it. Five months before the formation of the Coalition Government THE TIMES had urged that men like Mr. Balfour, Lord Milner, Lord Curzon and others should be given opportunities worthy of them ; and for months it went on demanding the reduction of the Cabinet to a manageable size. National organization and a national register, which were the steps that led through Lord Derby's recruiting scheme to conscription ; the revival of the General Staff, and the creation of the War Council ; national economy, and the organization of food resources ; the cessation of professional football matches and of race-meetings and the provision of bullet-proof helmets for the British troops—these were some of the suggestions, first made and strongly urged by THE TIMES, which were adopted by the Government.

Most remarkable of all was the action taken with regard to the sick and wounded. On August 31st, 1914, THE TIMES published and supported in a leading article an appeal on behalf of the British Red Cross Society. The response was immediate, and throughout the War THE TIMES kept it from slackening. In September, 1914, THE TIMES effected the unification, for the period of the War, of the Red Cross Society and the St. John Ambulance Association, and thenceforward the two bodies worked together and shared the fund and the labours. By the end of the year 1919 the amount collected was no less than £16,121,939 7s. 0d. ; and not the British Forces alone but also our Allies had benefited to the full extent of this colossal sum. Besides this, in consequence of a dispatch by its Medical Correspondent from Paris in October, 1914, THE TIMES brought about the co-ordination of the British Red Cross Society and the St. John Ambulance Association with the Royal Army Medical Corps, through Sir Alfred Keogh, the Director-General of the Army Medical Services, and this co-ordination led to a great increase in the number of surgeons at the front, to the full use of the ambulance convoys of the Red Cross Society, and to a vast improvement in the efficiency of the nursing and care of the sick and wounded.



THE PRESENT JOHN WALTER.



## THE GREAT WAR AND AFTER

Meanwhile many other steps were taken in Printing House Square to keep the public instructed. A special telephone service was installed, by which callers could ask for the latest news at any hour of the day or night. At the beginning of every month the paper gave two pages of its ordinary issue to War maps and a diary of the chief events since the beginning of the War. It published two separate sets of War Maps and a big War Atlas. In the autumn of 1914 a special edition was published for the benefit of the many Americans who were stranded in England. Articles in *THE LITERARY SUPPLEMENT* (one of which was ordered by the Vice-Rector of the Paris Academy to be read aloud in every class in all the schools of Paris) dealt with the deeper issues of the War, and *THE ENGINEERING SUPPLEMENT* discussed the construction and manufacture of guns, torpedoes, shells and other munitions. Other publications included a Russian Supplement, then of great service, a translation of the French Yellow Book giving documents relating to diplomatic negotiations before the War; a Red Cross Supplement, a Recruiting Supplement; a Book of the Royal Navy, a Book of the Army; and a book called "The Way of the Red Cross," to which a preface was written by Queen Alexandra. The work of the greatest scope and importance was *THE TIMES HISTORY AND ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF THE WAR*, illustrated, which fills twenty-two volumes; and a *DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF THE WAR* was also undertaken.

Further sets of publications which had an enormous success were *THE TIMES* Broadsheets. These were passages of English literature printed on single sheets of paper for distribution among the troops, either enclosed in ordinary letters or sent out in large quantities. The idea, suggested by Mr. Lionel Curtis, was eagerly taken up by the Editor of *THE TIMES*, who, with the help of Professor Sir Walter Raleigh, Mr. B. L. Richmond, Mr. E. V. Lucas and others, prepared several hundred of these broadsheets. More than three million copies were sold; and an edition in Braille for blinded soldiers was made by the National Institute for the Blind. Ten years after the War had ended a selection from

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these passages was published in two volumes as "A Book of Broadsheets."

Soon after the end of the War, in February, 1919, Mr. Geoffrey Dawson resigned the Editorship and was succeeded by Mr. H. Wickham Steed, who for eleven years had been Correspondent of THE TIMES at Vienna and for five the director of its Foreign Department in London. These were strenuous and difficult years. THE TIMES did not see eye to eye with the Prime Minister over the terms of European settlement at the Peace Conference, nor (two years later) about the representation of Great Britain at the Washington Conference on Disarmament called by President Harding; and relations between the Government and Printing House Square were strained. In September, 1919, came the Coal Strike. THE TIMES was prepared for it, and by reducing the size of the issue, going to press two hours earlier than usual, and distributing by means of an organized system of motor-cars, it was able to supply eight or nine out of every ten readers as usual. And in other ways the old standards were maintained. In the years 1919 to 1921 a great advance was made by THE TIMES in distribution by air. A regular summer air service, which brought the late London edition of THE TIMES to Paris by eight o'clock in the morning, began in 1920; and the paper was sent by air as far afield as Egypt. THE TIMES alone received and published, in August, 1920, the story of the murder of the Russian Royal Family during the Revolution of 1917; and later, at the beginning of 1923 (a date which properly belongs to the next section), THE TIMES alone was represented (by its former War Correspondent, Sir Harry Perry Robinson) at the investigations in Egypt which included the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen.

In politics, the principal achievement of these post-War years was the advocacy by THE TIMES of a measure of self-government for Ireland, without compulsion upon Ulster. THE TIMES was the first to urge this measure upon a reluctant Government in days of great stress and misery in both Ireland and England, and in the end its counsels prevailed. Among others of its more agreeable tasks was

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the initiation and completion of THE TIMES fund for Westminster Abbey (now known as the Dean Ryle Fund), by which in 1921 more than £170,000 was raised and made over to trustees for the permanent preservation of the Abbey.

And a year later, in August, 1922, Westminster Abbey was crowded when the dead body of Lord Northcliffe, who had done so much to save it, was brought there for a memorial service on its way to the grave.



## VI

# A MODERN NEWSPAPER

ON October 25th, 1922, it was announced that the shares in THE TIMES PUBLISHING COMPANY owned by the late Lord Northcliffe, and also certain shares that were in other hands, had been acquired by Mr. John Walter, son of Mr. Arthur Walter and great-great-grandson of the founder, and that Major the Hon. John Jacob Astor was associated with Mr. Walter in their acquisition. Major Astor subsequently assumed the Chairmanship of the Company. On January 1st, 1923, Mr. Geoffrey Dawson once more became Editor of THE TIMES. Mr. W. Lints Smith, who had been Manager since December, 1920, continued to hold that office.

The purchase of the shares meant that henceforward THE TIMES had no connexion with any other newspaper or group of newspapers, but was entirely independent. The announcement had gone on to say that it was the intention and object of Mr. Walter and Major Astor to maintain the highest tradition of THE TIMES and to ensure its continuance as a national institution conducted solely in the best interests of the nation and the Empire. In the course of the following year, the two chief proprietors took further steps to ensure that in the event of any future transfer of the controlling shares, the ownership of THE TIMES should not be regarded as a mere matter of commerce to be transferred, without regard to any other circumstances, to the highest bidder, or to fall into unworthy hands. A Committee of five *ex-officio* members—The Lord Chief Justice of England, the Warden of All Souls College, Oxford, the President of the Royal Society, the President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, and the Governor of the Bank of England—may give or withhold their approval of any proposed transferee, having regard



MAJOR THE HON. J. J. ASTOR, M.P.



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to the importance of maintaining the best traditions and the political independence of THE TIMES newspaper and of eliminating as far as reasonably possible questions of personal ambition or personal profit.

In the chronicle of the years that have followed the establishment of the journal on its new basis, the most exciting event was the General Strike of 1926. Suppression of the newspapers had been part of the deliberate policy framed by the organizers of that strike ; and (very reluctantly except in a few cases among the least skilled and relatively best paid men) printers, clerks, secretaries and all had to obey the call and go out. The night of Monday, May 3rd, did not pass without trouble ; but THE TIMES of Tuesday, May 4th, was the last number for a fortnight to be produced entirely and taken to the railway stations by Trade Unionist labour. And when the strikers poured out in the early morning, to find no trams, trains or buses to get home in, they were transported (at the suggestion of Major Astor, who was still in the office) in the fleet of emergency cars which had been prepared to carry the papers to their destination.

This Gilbertian episode (only one of several which occurred at THE TIMES Office in the preliminary stages of the strike) showed that the management was well prepared. THE TIMES was the only London daily newspaper which never failed to produce a number every day throughout the strike. The issue of Wednesday, May 5th (No. 44,263), is a single sheet, 13ins. by 8ins., printed by six multi-graph machines which had been very unostentatiously installed with their operators on the previous Monday—quite in the old spirit of THE TIMES of John Walter II. The front page is occupied by a weather forecast and news of the strike ; on the back is a report of Parliament, which fills one column, twenty-seven lines of finance, fourteen lines of cricket, and the broadcasting programme. For the first time in the history of the paper there were no advertisements. Of this now famous little sheet 48,000 copies were printed by eight o'clock in the morning, when the machines were stopped.

The story of the remaining fortnight would take too long to tell here in detail. The gist of it was that the members of the staff

who were not members of a trade union set to work to learn the use of all sorts of strange machines, and to master unfamiliar branches of journalism. Two Walters showed in the foundry that the spirit of their ancestors lived on. THE TIMES of Thursday, May 6th, was composed and printed by the usual methods, if not with the usual skill. Not less important than production was distribution. Here there was danger to add to difficulty, since the strikers had determined to prevent it, if possible, by force. But here again THE TIMES was forewarned and forearmed. On the afternoon of Wednesday, May 5th, an attempt had been made to burn down the office by pouring a stream of petrol into the machine room and throwing lighted matches on it. There was a tremendous blaze, but the fire was all but put out by the staff before the fire engines arrived. A hostile demonstration later in the evening (it was very soon made known to the proprietors that no employee of THE TIMES had anything to do with these acts of violence) added to the warning. The office was carefully garrisoned by stalwarts on the staff ; and when attempts were made to interfere with the distribution of the paper by the voluntary service of motor-cars, the pickets found to their disgust that they had to reckon with (among others) the very athletic members of the sporting department, whose experiences in the War, no less than on the cricket ground, the football ground and the golf links, made them " ugly customers " to tackle.

It would have been well if the trials of THE TIMES during that fortnight had come only from the strikers and those who had forced them to strike. But the heaviest blow of all was dealt by the Government, which THE TIMES was supporting by its unheard-of labours. A Government journal entitled *The British Gazette* was founded but very soon found itself without any paper to print on. Whereupon it proposed to seize the whole of the stock possessed (thanks to its forethought) by THE TIMES. A protest was addressed by the Editor to the Prime Minister ; but actually a quarter of the stock of THE TIMES was seized for this Government organ. Fortunately, this second threat against the liberty of the Press was frustrated by



Centre: John Thadeus Delane (1841-1877).  
 Wickham Steed (1919-1922). Geoffrey Dawson (Present Editor).  
 (1917-1919 & 1922- ).



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the collapse of the strike. *The British Gazette* disappeared in a night ; and THE TIMES had succeeded in presenting, in its unbroken series of four-page numbers, the true perspective of the news of the day, excluding no important pronouncements merely on the ground that they diverged from the journal's own opinion about the issues at stake. The circulation meanwhile had risen from the 48,000 of May 5th to 405,000 on Saturday, May 15th, the last day on which the paper was produced and published under strike conditions.

The strike was declared at an end on Wednesday, May 12th. On the following day THE TIMES opened a fund through which the country might express its gratitude to the Police for the large measure of peace and safety which they had maintained. By May 29th, when the fund was closed, the amount had reached £241,833 16s. 1d. Its success, in fact, had been even more rapid than THE TIMES fund for the preservation of St. Paul's Cathedral. That appeal, issued on January 8th, 1925, raised a sum of well over a quarter of a million pounds ; and four years later THE TIMES secured within a week more than £150,000 towards the total required for the purchase of radium as part of the thank-offering for the recovery of King George V.

At the Wembley Exhibition in 1924 THE TIMES pavilion occupied an important site, and the King and other British and foreign Royal persons were among those who came to see the exhibits, which included the printing by hand-presses of facsimiles of the numbers of January 1st, 1788 (the first number called THE TIMES), and of the number giving an account of the Battle of Trafalgar. Another event of some interest to readers of THE TIMES was the first publication of THE TIMES crossword puzzle on January 23rd, 1930.

The true contemporary history of the paper, however, is not to be found in such details as these ; it is to be found day by day in the paper itself. It is a history of independent judgment, free of party bias, on all public questions. It is a history of argus-eyed watchfulness for news, all the world over, by correspondents in every country and in nearly every town, who are capable not only



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of getting news but of sifting the false from the true, and thus preventing the public from being misled, while supplying the Editor and his staff with knowledge of all that is happening and warning of what may be going to happen. By all the devices of transmission, from a yak caravan to international wireless, news is being sent off to THE TIMES by day and night, there to be so absorbed and presented that each day's number may give a just and proportionate idea of the state of the world. Equal care is taken over the highest politics and the account of a football match ; over the excavation of an ancient city and a trial for murder. Thirty years ago a writer remarked that every article in THE TIMES must be able to bear the criticism of experts in the particular subject with which it deals ; and at the same time the paper must meet the requirements not of experts only, but of the general reader. And that is as true to-day as it was then. The average number of words in a copy of THE TIMES is more than a quarter of a million--that is, equal to about six novels. Not to mention the advertisements, which (especially perhaps the " agony column ") are in themselves an epitome of modern civilization, the editorial matter treats of the law (THE TIMES Law Reports are the only newspaper reports accepted by the Courts, being the work of barristers), of sport, of Parliament, of trade and commerce, of home news, of art, literature, science, the drama and all kindred subjects, of foreign news from all the world over, of religion, of the Court and society, of finance. The leading articles express the considered opinions of the journal. Special articles, exclusively communicated to THE TIMES, deal at length with topics of the moment, from the ascent of a great mountain to the anniversary of a great poet ; and the picture-page introduced in March, 1922, has proved itself a favourite and indispensable feature.

Besides this great conspectus of the world from day to day, there are the three regular weekly supplements of THE TIMES : The LITERARY SUPPLEMENT, the EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT, and the TRADE AND ENGINEERING SUPPLEMENT. There is the illustrated weekly edition of THE TIMES, which brings to readers all over the

# The City of London's gratitude to THE TIMES

TO COMMEMORATE THE VALUABLE EXCEPTIONS OF THE TIMES NEWSPAPER IN THE FURNISHING OF A REMARKABLE PRECEDENT FOR THE MOST EXPENSIVE LAMPS, WHICH PAPER HAD SUBSIDIZED THE PRODUCTIONS.

At a Meeting of Merchants, Bankers and others held at the City of London on the 10th of October, 1851, the Right Hon. Sir John Lubbock, Bart., M.P., presiding, the following resolutions were passed in substance:—  
That the Times Newspaper, in its exposure of the iniquitous and dishonest practices of the Bankers and others, has done more to bring to light the iniquitous and dishonest practices of the Bankers and others, than any other newspaper has done; and that the Times Newspaper, by its exposure of the iniquitous and dishonest practices of the Bankers and others, has done more to bring to light the iniquitous and dishonest practices of the Bankers and others, than any other newspaper has done.

That the effect of such exposure is not only to bring to light the iniquitous and dishonest practices of the Bankers and others, but also to bring to light the iniquitous and dishonest practices of the Bankers and others, and that the Times Newspaper, by its exposure of the iniquitous and dishonest practices of the Bankers and others, has done more to bring to light the iniquitous and dishonest practices of the Bankers and others, than any other newspaper has done.

The Proprietors of the Times, in their exposure of the iniquitous and dishonest practices of the Bankers and others, have done more to bring to light the iniquitous and dishonest practices of the Bankers and others, than any other newspaper has done.

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Tablet affixed over the North Entrance of THE TIMES Office in  
Printing House Square



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Empire and foreign lands the principal contents of the daily paper, now and then with some features peculiar to itself—among which are the instantaneous natural colour photographs, the first of their kind. There are the occasional illustrated special numbers dealing with a foreign country, a trade, an art, a commodity. And there are books published by THE TIMES, some of them reprints in book form of these special numbers, some of them collections of articles which have appeared in the daily issue, and some of them independent publications like the popular edition of the letters of Queen Victoria, edited by Mr. G. E. Buckle.

This autumn THE TIMES has taken another stride forward, to maintain its place in the van of the world's journalism. From Monday, October 3rd, it has been printed in a new type specially designed for easy reading under modern conditions. For the first time in history a newspaper has specified, originated, designed and cut its own types. With that change comes another, apparently more revolutionary. But in printing its main heading in roman letters, THE TIMES is returning to the simple dignity of its earliest days. The "gothic" title **The Times**, which was adopted in obedience to an affectation of the late eighteenth century, has become a commonplace of journalism, and has now been discarded by THE TIMES in favour of an older, handsomer, and more honest kind of letter.

Now, as of old, the mechanical equipment of THE TIMES Office is unequalled. In particular, the machinery in use for the printing of the picture page is worthy of the remarkable TIMES photographs which it reproduces. But in every department the aim is one—a combination of extreme swiftness with excellence of material and thoroughness of workmanship, corresponding to the speed and the care which preserve in the new age the constant spirit of THE TIMES, and make it not only a considered report of the events of times present, but a permanent historical record of times past, and a guide to times future.



Printed in the Office of  
THE TIMES  
1932





